MARVEL LEGACY LOKI: SORCERER SUPREME PART 1

381

# DOCTOR STRANGE®

CATES
WALTA
BELLAIRE

STEPHEN STRANGE WAS A PREEMINENT SURGEON UNTIL A CAR ACCIDENT DAMAGED THE NERVES IN HIS HANDS. HIS EGO DROVE HIM TO SCOUR THE GLOBE FOR A MIRACLE CURE. INSTEAD, HE FOUND A MYSTERIOUS WIZARD CALLED THE ANCIENT ONE WHO TAUGHT HIM MAGIC AND THAT THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS WORLD BIGGER THAN HIMSELF. THESE LESSONS ENABLED STEPHEN TO BECOME THE SORCERER SUPREME, EARTH'S FIRST DEFENSE AGAINST ALL MANNER OF MAGICAL THREATS. HIS PATIENTS CALL HIM...

# DOCTOR STRANGE

LAST TIME...

AFTER DEFEATING AN INVASION BY ANTI-MAGIC ZEALOTS FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, STEPHEN WAS POISONED ON A QUEST TO COLLECT AN ENCHANTED ARTIFACT--ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING IN OUR REALM. HIS FRIEND, LIBRARIAN ZELMA STANTON, TRANSFERRED THE DEADLY POISON TO HERSELF TO SAVE HIM. TO SAVE HER IN TURN, STEPHEN CONFERRED SOME OF HIS MAGICAL IMMUNITY--OVER HIS ASSISTANT WONG'S OBJECTIONS.

WHEN LAST WE SAW THEM, WONG HAD LEFT THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM, AND STRANGE AND ZELMA, HIS NEW APPRENTICE, WERE LEARNING HOW TO NAVIGATE THE NEW MAGICAL LANDSCAPE.

"LOKI: **SORCERER SUPREME**" PART ONE


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SO...

...BY NOW YOU HAVE NO DOUBT HEARD THE NEWS...

177A BLEECKER ST

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

THINGS HAVE... *CHANGED.*

UM...

HE'S NOT HOME.

WAS THIS HOUSE ALWAYS FLOATING?

IT WASN'T, RIGHT?

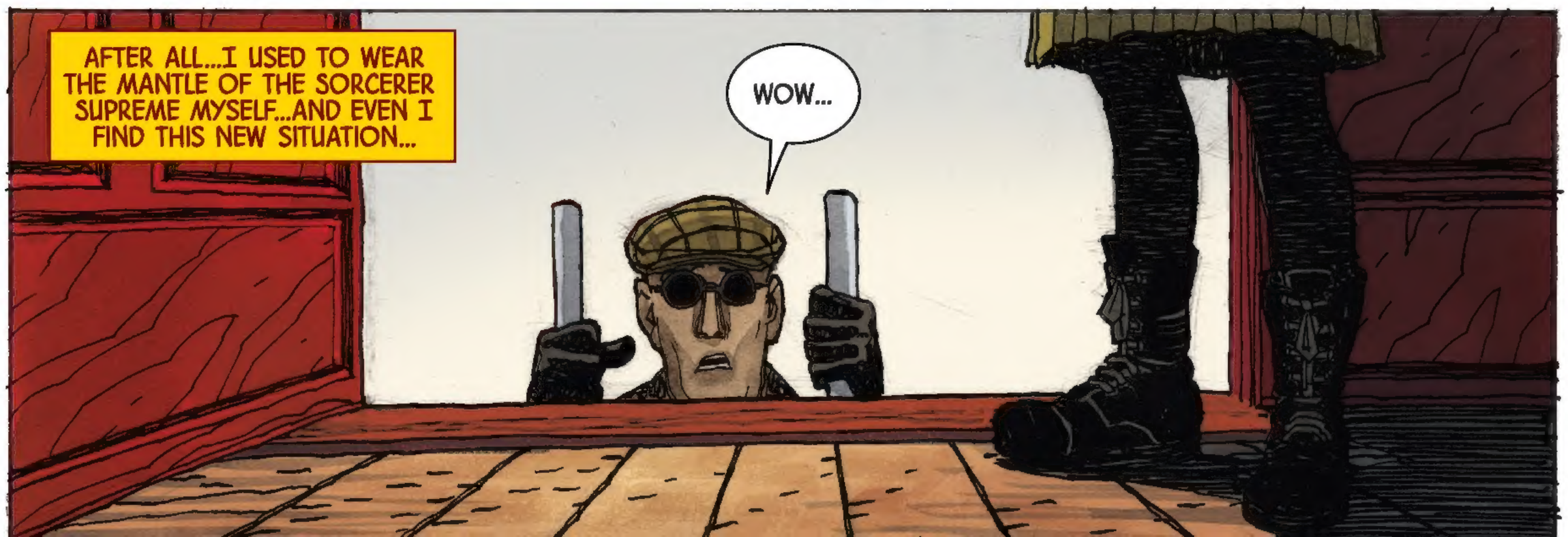
NO, YEAH, THAT'S NEW. HE DOESN'T LIKE WALK-INS. IT'S OKAY, THOUGH-- I CAN HELP. WHAT'S GOING ON?

I'M SURE YOU ARE JUST *DELIRIOUS* WITH QUESTIONS.

AND THAT'S PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE. HONESTLY, *IT'S OKAY IF NONE OF THIS MAKES ANY SENSE.*
...I'M FAIRLY SURE MY...EYEBALLS ARE HAUNTED?
*MMHMM.* ONE SPIRIT FOR BOTH OR A DIFFERENT ONE FOR EACH EYE?
OH. UM, THEY'VE BEEN ARGUING WITH EACH OTHER A LOT, SO...

DON'T WORRY. I'LL EXPLAIN *EVERYTHING.*
GOTCHA. OKAY, THAT'S NO BIGGIE. I CAN FIX THAT.

WELL, AS BEST AS I CAN, ANYWAY...
I'M ZELMA, BY THE WAY. SHALL WE?


AFTER ALL...I USED TO WEAR THE MANTLE OF THE SORCERER SUPREME MYSELF...AND EVEN I FIND THIS NEW SITUATION...
WOW...

...SURREAL.

TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF WHEN YOU COME IN, OKAY?

THIS IS...

IMPOSSIBLE, RIGHT? DON'T WORRY, EVERYTHING IS PERFECTLY SAFE HERE THESE DAYS. DO YOU WANT ANYTHING TO EAT OR DRINK?

I CAN HAVE THE SNAKES BRING US SOME CUCUMBER SANDWICHES AND TEA IF YOU WANT.

SNAKES?

HELLO, MADAM ZELMA. IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU AND BE RESPECTFUL TO YOU.

YOU'LL TELL THE NEW MASTER WE ARE RESPECTFUL, YES?

WE ARE GOOD SNAKES NOW.

YES, YOU ARE. I'LL TELL HIM.

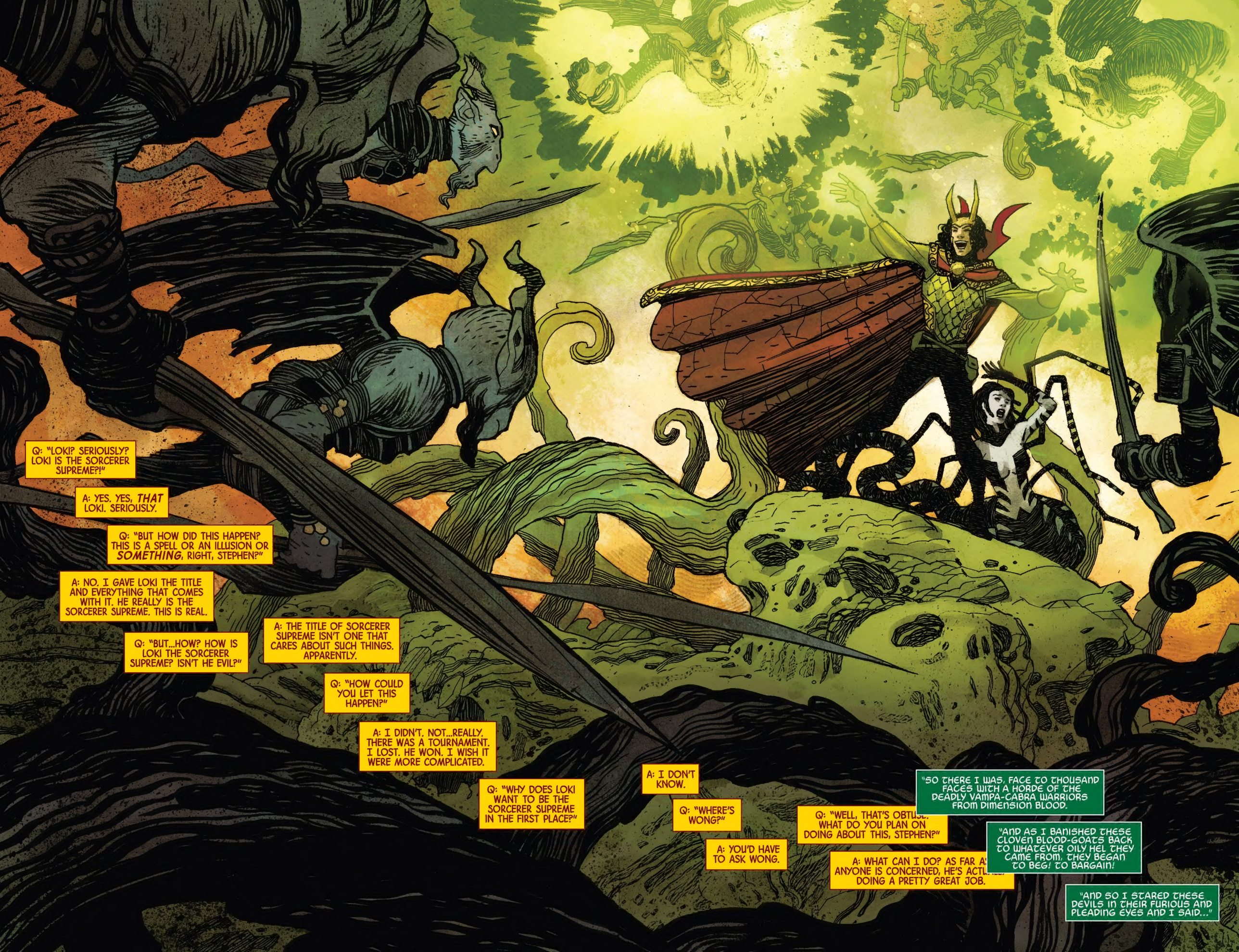
IS THAT AN AX? JEEZ, SOMEBODY REALLY WANTS INTO THIS ROOM...

YEAH, THAT'S BEEN A...WHOLE THING. BEST WE AVOID THAT ONE. LET'S KEEP IT MOVING...

WHAT... WHAT IS THIS?!

AH, YES...

...BY THE POWER OF THE DECIMALS OF DEWEY, BEHOLD!
THE GREATEST LIBRARY IN ALL OF THE TEN REALMS.


Q: "LOKI? SERIOUSLY? LOKI IS THE SORCERER SUPREME?!"
A: YES. YES, *THAT* LOKI. SERIOUSLY.
Q: "BUT HOW DID THIS HAPPEN? THIS IS A SPELL OR AN ILLUSION OR *SOMETHING*, RIGHT, STEPHEN?"
A: NO. I GAVE LOKI THE TITLE AND EVERYTHING THAT COMES WITH IT. HE REALLY IS THE SORCERER SUPREME. THIS IS REAL.
Q: "BUT...HOW? HOW IS LOKI THE SORCERER SUPREME? ISN'T HE EVIL?"
A: THE TITLE OF SORCERER SUPREME ISN'T ONE THAT CARES ABOUT SUCH THINGS. APPARENTLY.
Q: "HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN?"
A: I DIDN'T. NOT...REALLY. THERE WAS A TOURNAMENT. I LOST. HE WON. I WISH IT WERE MORE COMPLICATED.
Q: "WHY DOES LOKI WANT TO BE THE SORCERER SUPREME IN THE FIRST PLACE?"
A: I DON'T KNOW.
Q: "WHERE'S WONG?"
A: YOU'D HAVE TO ASK WONG.
Q: "WELL, THAT'S OBTUSE. WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON DOING ABOUT THIS, STEPHEN?"
A: WHAT CAN I DO? AS FAR AS ANYONE IS CONCERNED, HE'S ACTUALLY DOING A PRETTY GREAT JOB.
"SO THERE I WAS, FACE TO THOUSAND FACES WITH A HORDE OF THE DEADLY VAMPA-CABRA WARRIORS FROM DIMENSION BLOOD.
"AND AS I BANISHED THESE CLOVEN BLOOD-GOATS BACK TO WHATEVER OILY HEL THEY CAME FROM, THEY BEGAN TO BEG! TO BARGAIN!
"AND SO I STARED THESE DEVILS IN THEIR FURIOUS AND PLEADING EYES AND I SAID..."

"YOU MUST HAVE ME CONFUSED WITH MY PREDECESSOR. I DO NOT MAKE DEALS.

"MY NAME IS LOKI LAUFEYSON, GOD OF LIES, MISCHIEF, AND STORIES...

"...AND I'M THE %$#@ SORCERER SUPREME."

YOU SEE... I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS FOR SOME TIME NOW. THIS BUSINESS ABOUT MAGIC ALWAYS HAVING SOME SORT OF "COST"...SOME SORT OF "PRICE"...IT'S QUITE... SILLY, IS IT NOT?
I THINK IT'S TIME WE... REEXAMINE THE RULES A BIT, YES?

RED WITCH BRINGS UP GOOD POINT. WHEN I HEAR "GOD OF" SOMETHING, I JUST ASSUME THAT MEANS THIS PERSON IS GOOD AT THIS THING. LIKE THOR, YES? GOD OF THUNDER...VERY GOOD AT THUNDER. BUT THEN THERE IS YOU WITH THE AWFUL LIES AND--
THINK OF ME WHATEVER YOU LIKE...BUT IF YOU BELIEVE NOTHING ELSE, THEN BELIEVE THIS:

I AM NOT NOW, NOR HAVE I EVER BEEN, OVERLY FOND OF "THE RULES."

CALL ME OLD FASHIONED...BUT I TEND TO THINK THAT YOU FAIR WITCHES AND WARLOCKS SHOULD HAVE THE FREEDOM TO GO ABOUT YOUR DUTIES WITHOUT KILLING RODENTS AND VOMITING EVERYWHERE, DON'T YOU?
I MEAN, HONESTLY. MAGIC BY ITS VERY NATURE IS THE ANTITHESIS OF "RULES," YES?
THE "RULES" SAY THERE'S NO RABBIT IN THE HAT... AND YET...POOF! HERE IS A RABBIT!
SO, WHERE AM I GOING WITH THIS?

HOW ABOUT...NO MORE RULES. HOW ABOUT NO MORE "PRICE."

HOW YOU ASK? WELL, YOU SEE, UNLIKE MY PREDECESSOR...I HAPPEN TO HAVE THE GOOD FORTUNE AND STURDY CONSTITUTION BEFIT OF A GOD.
SO, IN THE FUTURE, YOU ALL PERFORM YOUR MAGICAL DUTIES, AND THEN YOU COME TO ME...AND I'LL EAT YOUR PRICE FOR YOU! I CAN DO THAT. I'M A--
$%#@ LIAR!

→SIGH← AND HOW MAY I HELP YOU, NOW, COUNT KAOZ?
EVERYTHING HAS PRICE, PRETENDER. WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKING US ALL IN RETURN FOR THIS FREEDOM, AY, LOKI? I DON'T SUPPOSE THIS "GIFT" COMES WITH ANY MINOR CAVEATS, NO?

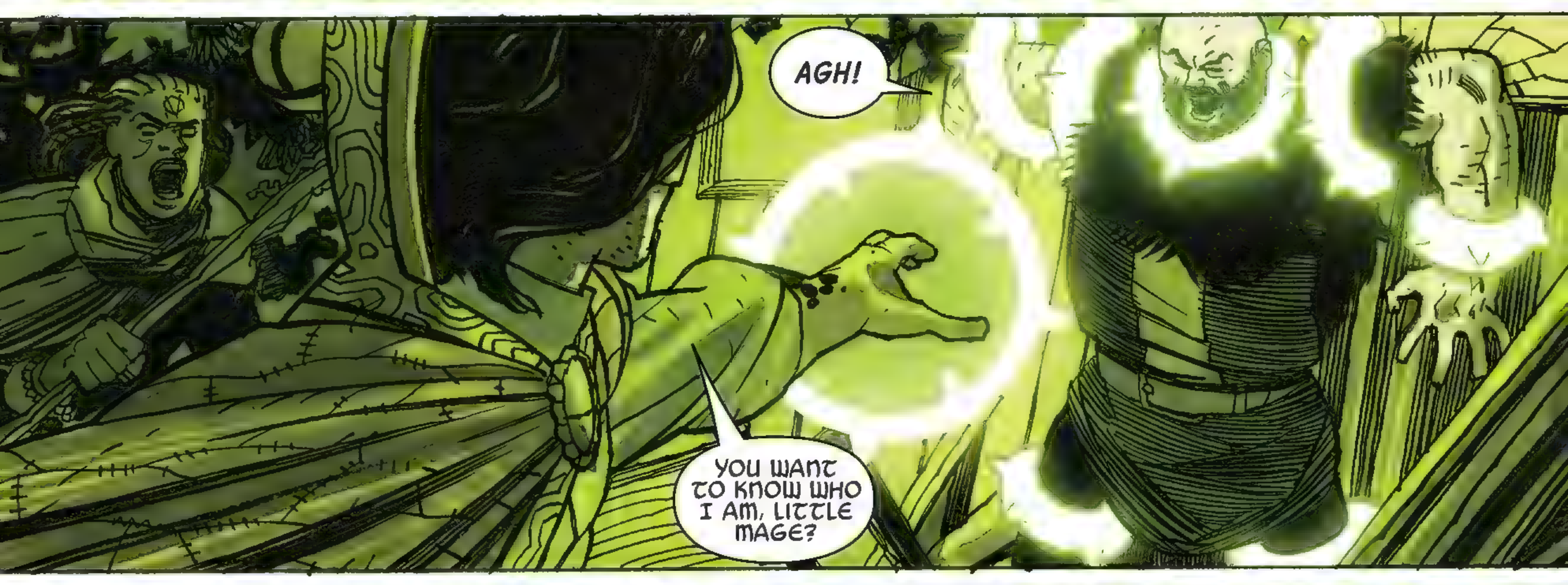
WELL... AS YOU ALL KNOW, AND I'M NOT ASHAMED TO SAY IT MYSELF...I AM QUITE NEW TO THIS ROLE.

SO YES, I'LL ADMIT, MY PROPOSED SIN-EATING IS NOT WITHOUT ITS OWN SELF-SERVING NEEDS...
SIMPLY PUT...I NEED YOUR HELP.

WHEN STEPHEN GAVE ME THE KEYS TO THE SANCTUM, HE DIDN'T...WELL, THE SNEAKY DEVIL DIDN'T EXACTLY GIVE ME EVERYTHING.
FOR EXAMPLE... THERE'S THIS ONE ROOM I CAN'T SEEM TO ACCESS...AND, HAHA, BOY, IS IT JUST DRIVING ME INSANE!

THAT'S JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF COURSE, BUT... I WONDER...
...SINCE I HAVE YOU ALL HERE...DOES A SPELL BY THE NAME OF *"THE EXILE OF SINGHSOON"* RING ANYONE'S BELL?
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!
I-I'M... I'M SORRY, WHAT...
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!
...WHAT IS EVERYONE LAUGHING ABOUT?
HA! YOU ARE JOKING, NO?! OH, POOR LITTLE LOKI, YOU ARE ***NEVER*** FINDING THIS SPELL, YOU ***RAVING MANIAC.*** NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THIS SPELL IS.
EVEN IF WE DID, WE WOULDN'T TELL SOME LYING HALFLING GOD TRYING TO IMPRESS EVERYONE BY STRUTTING ABOUT IN DOCTOR STRANGE'S CLOTHES. I MEAN, WHO ARE YOU EVEN--
YOU KNOW WHAT, KAOZ? YOU WERE RIGHT...

...EVERYTHING DOES HAVE A PRICE.
WHAM


AGH!
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO I AM, LITTLE MAGE?

I AM LOKI LAUFEYSON, SON OF ODIN, GOD OF MYTHS AND LEGENDS, HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ASGARD AND THE RIGHTFULLY APPOINTED SORCERER SUPREME OF THIS REALM.
WHICH MAKES ME THE ABSOLUTE LAST PERSON YOU WANT TO MOUTH OFF TO LEST YOU WIND UP INSIDE OUT. IS THAT CLEAR? OR DO WE NEED TO---

HEY! THAT'S ENOUGH!
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE. OUT OF MY BAR. NOW.
WHAT BAR?

WHA--?

I DIDN'T WANT TO DO THIS.

I CAME HERE TO HELP.

KNOW THAT MY OFFER STILL STANDS. IF ANY OF YOU NEED ANYTHING...

...YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND ME.

Loki:I think I messed up

Zelma: Oh, no... what's wrong?? ☹

Loki: I don't know. I went to that bar thing and it got all weird.

Loki: I don't think I'm doing this right.

BRRMMMMMBLLL

OH, HEL...

Loki: Going to be late ⛈ ☹

LOKI!
THIS DECEPTION ENDS NOW.

I HAVE JUST LEARNED OF THIS TRICK OF YOURS, AND WHILE THE REST OF ASGARD IS HAPPY TO BE RID OF YOU, I ASSURE YOU I AM--
OKAY... YOU KNOW WHAT?

FINE.

...WHAT? WHAT IS FINE?

I *SHOULD* JUST GIVE UP. NO ONE WANTS ME IN THIS ROLE. NO ONE WILL TRUST THAT I HAVE CHANGED, AND I SEEM TO BE UNFIT TO PROVE THEM WRONG.

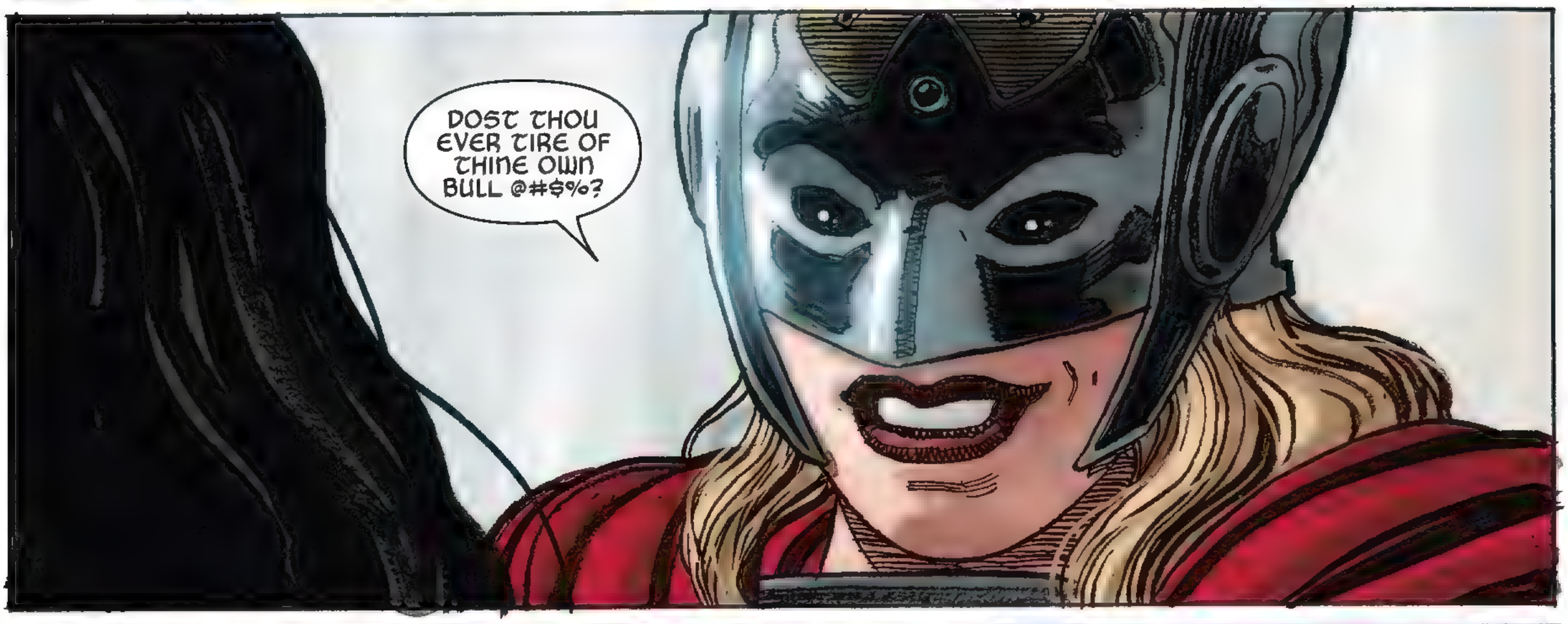
...

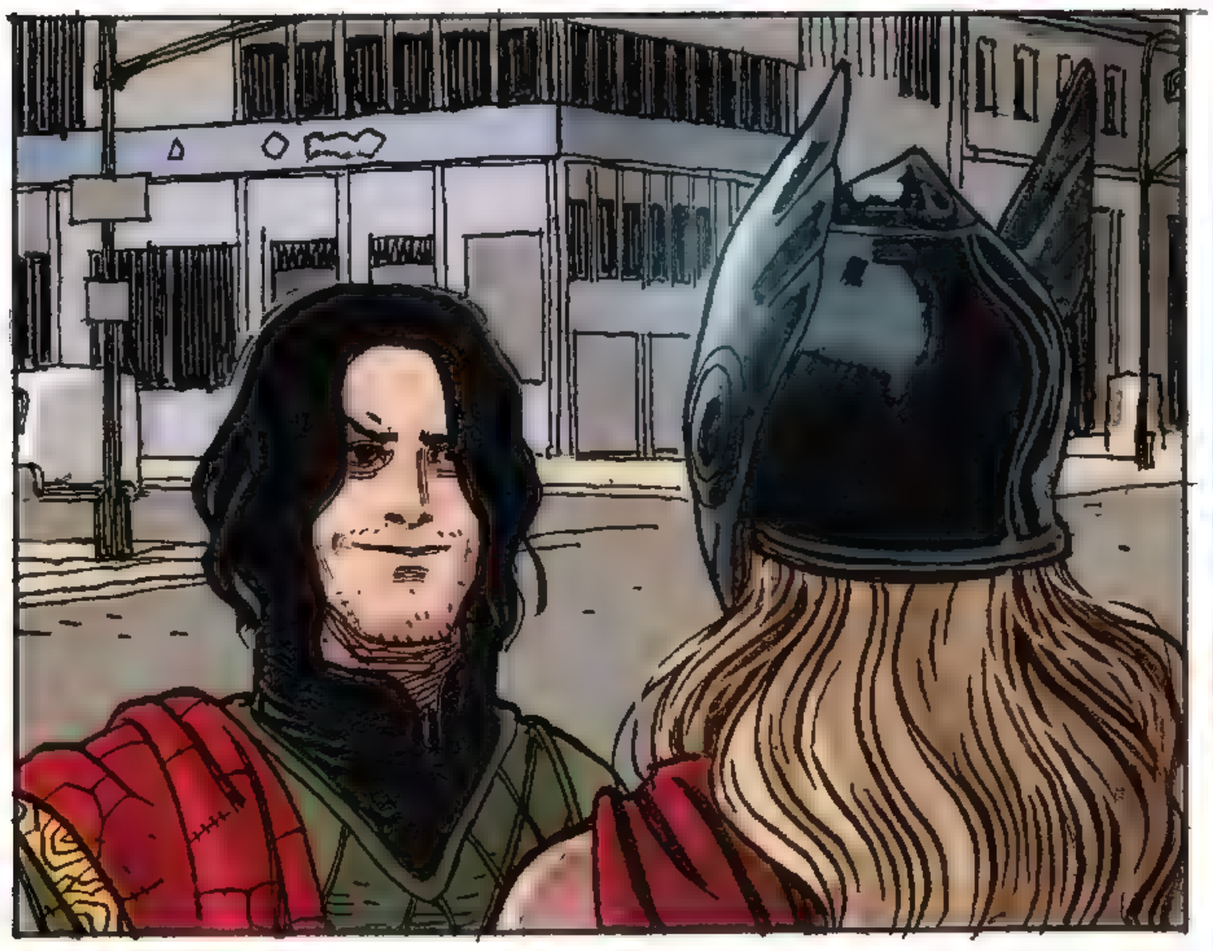
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS, LOKI? WHAT IS YOUR GAME?

WHEN STRANGE HAD THE JOB, HE NEARLY LOST MIDGARD TO THE MAN WHO TORE THIS CLOAK TO RAGS. I SEWED IT TOGETHER WITH ASGARDIAN THREAD I SPUN MYSELF.

STEPHEN WASN'T FIT FOR THE ROLE ANY LONGER... SOMEONE MUST PROTECT THIS REALM FROM THE UNSEEN...
...FROM THE THINGS ONE CANNOT DEFEAT WITH HAMMERS ALONE.

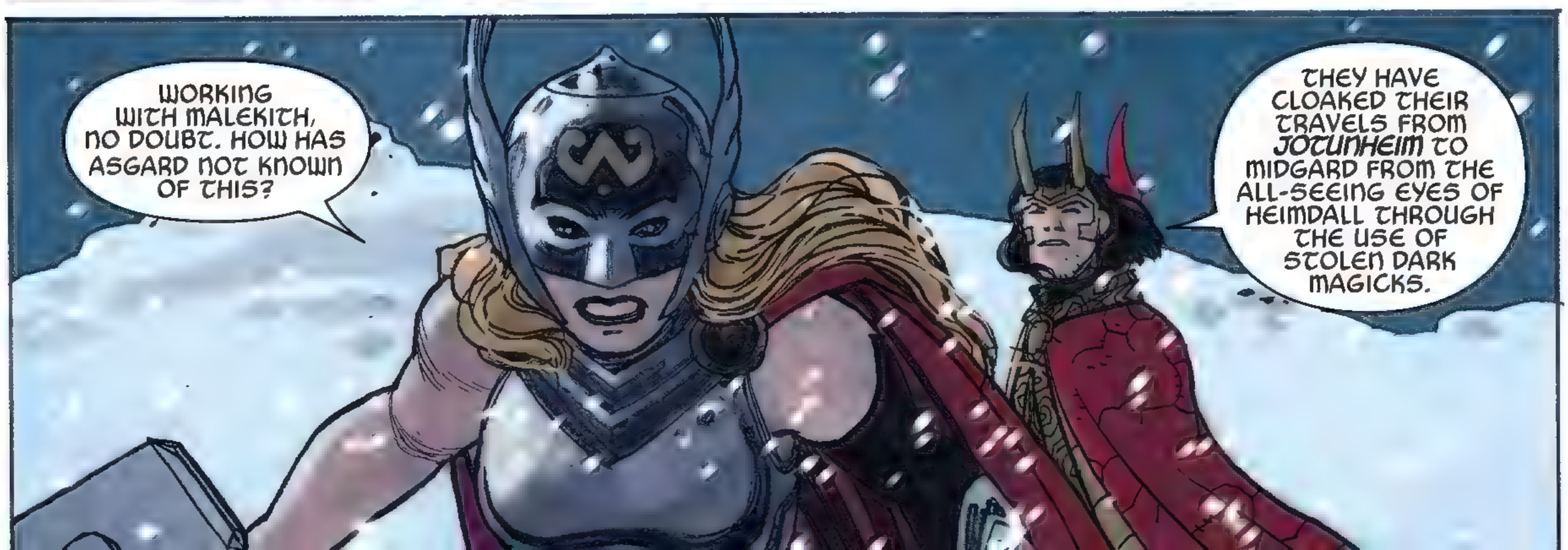
SO YES, FINE. GO AHEAD AND HAUL ME TO MY CELL IN ASGARD IF YOU MUST.
BUT KNOW THAT YOU WOULD BE LEAVING THIS WORLD UNGUARDED AGAINST THREATS EVEN THE MIGHTIEST OF ASGARD COULD NOT DEFEND AGAINST.
LOKI...

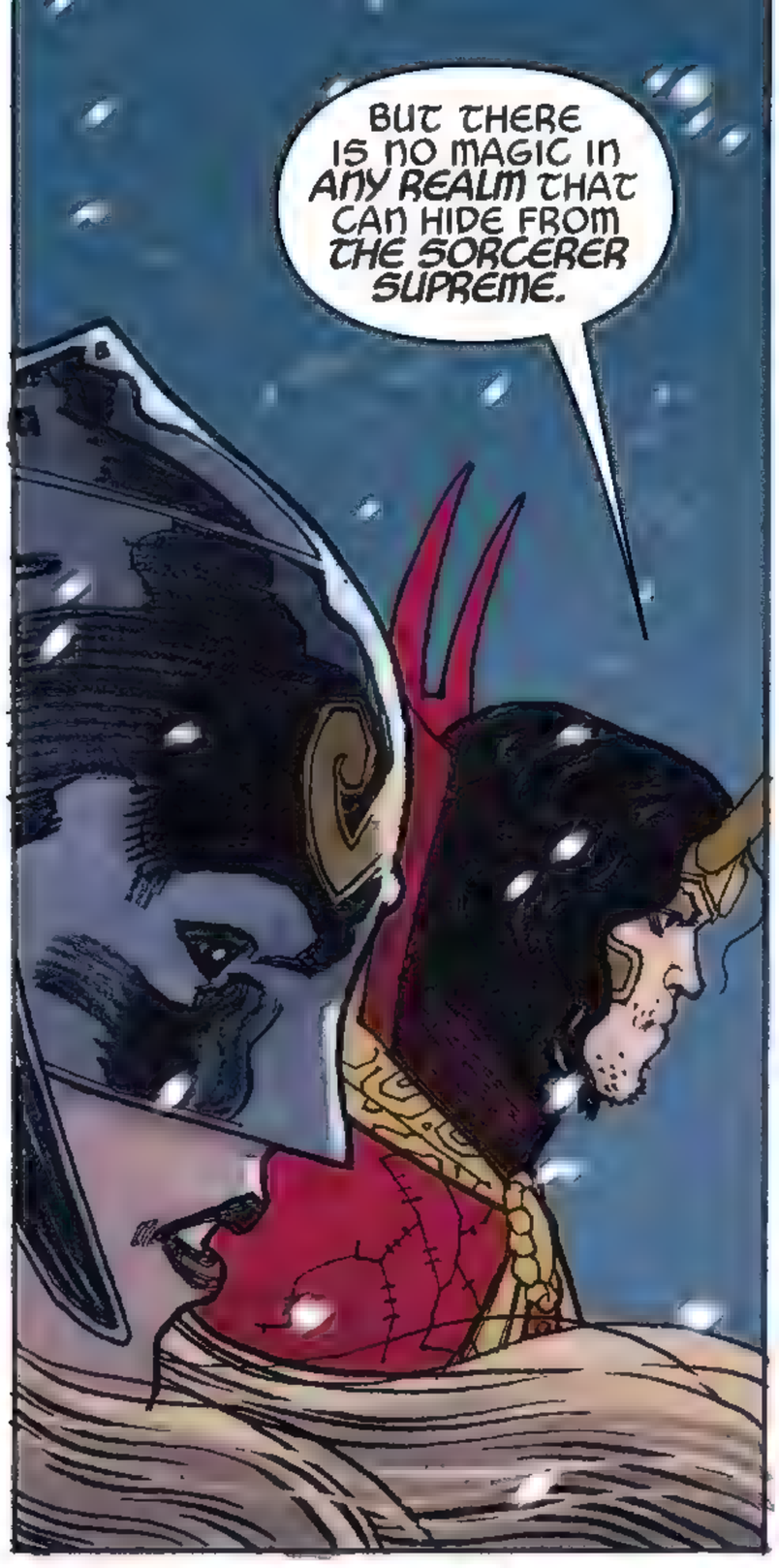

DOST THOU EVER TIRE OF THINE OWN BULL @#$%?



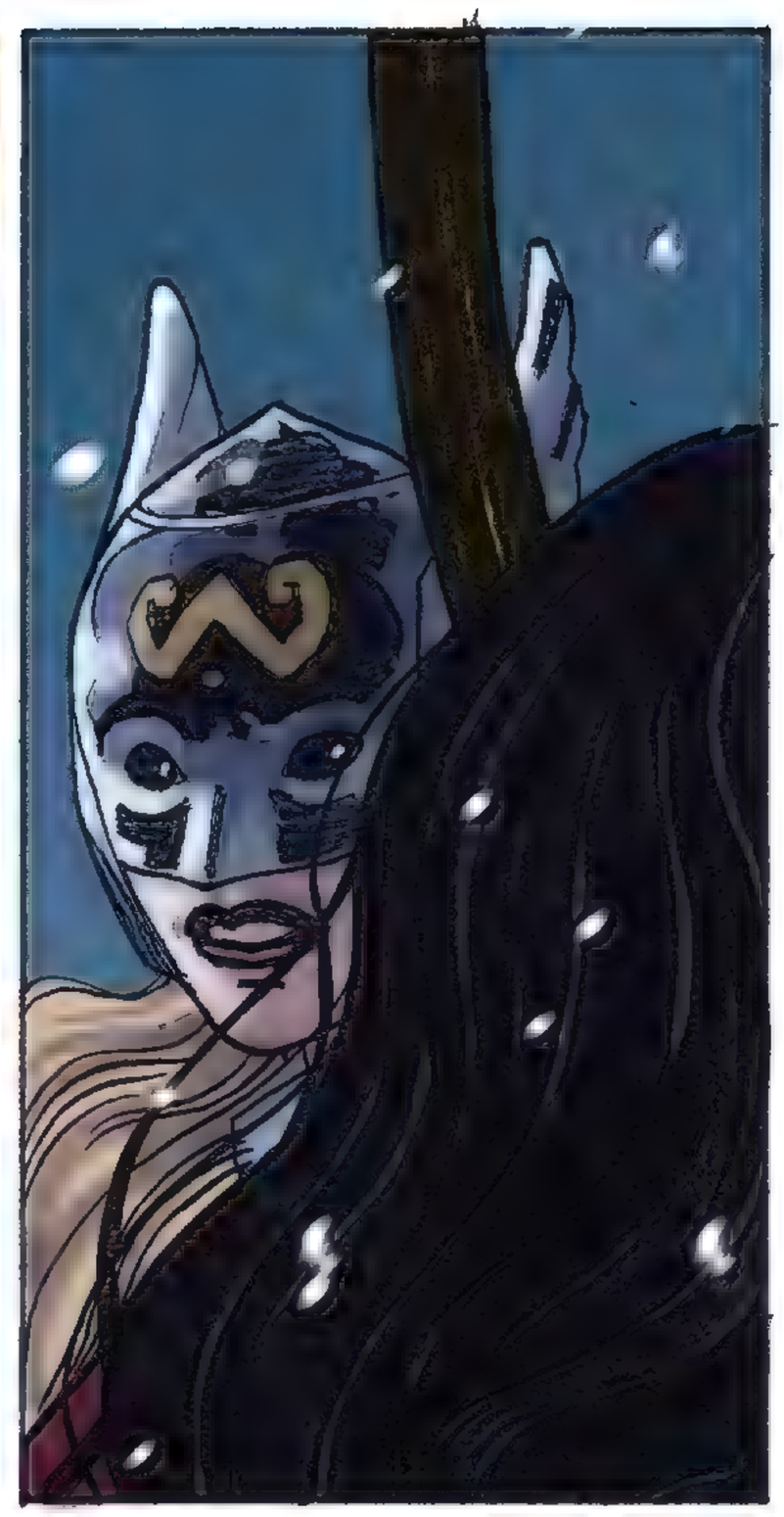
COME. I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING.

FROST GIANTS, OF COURSE. THEY HAVE BEEN PREPARING TO INVADE MIDGARD FOR SOME TIME NOW. THEY HAVE ONLY JUST ARRIVED.




BUT THERE IS NO MAGIC IN ANY REALM THAT CAN HIDE FROM THE SORCERER SUPREME.

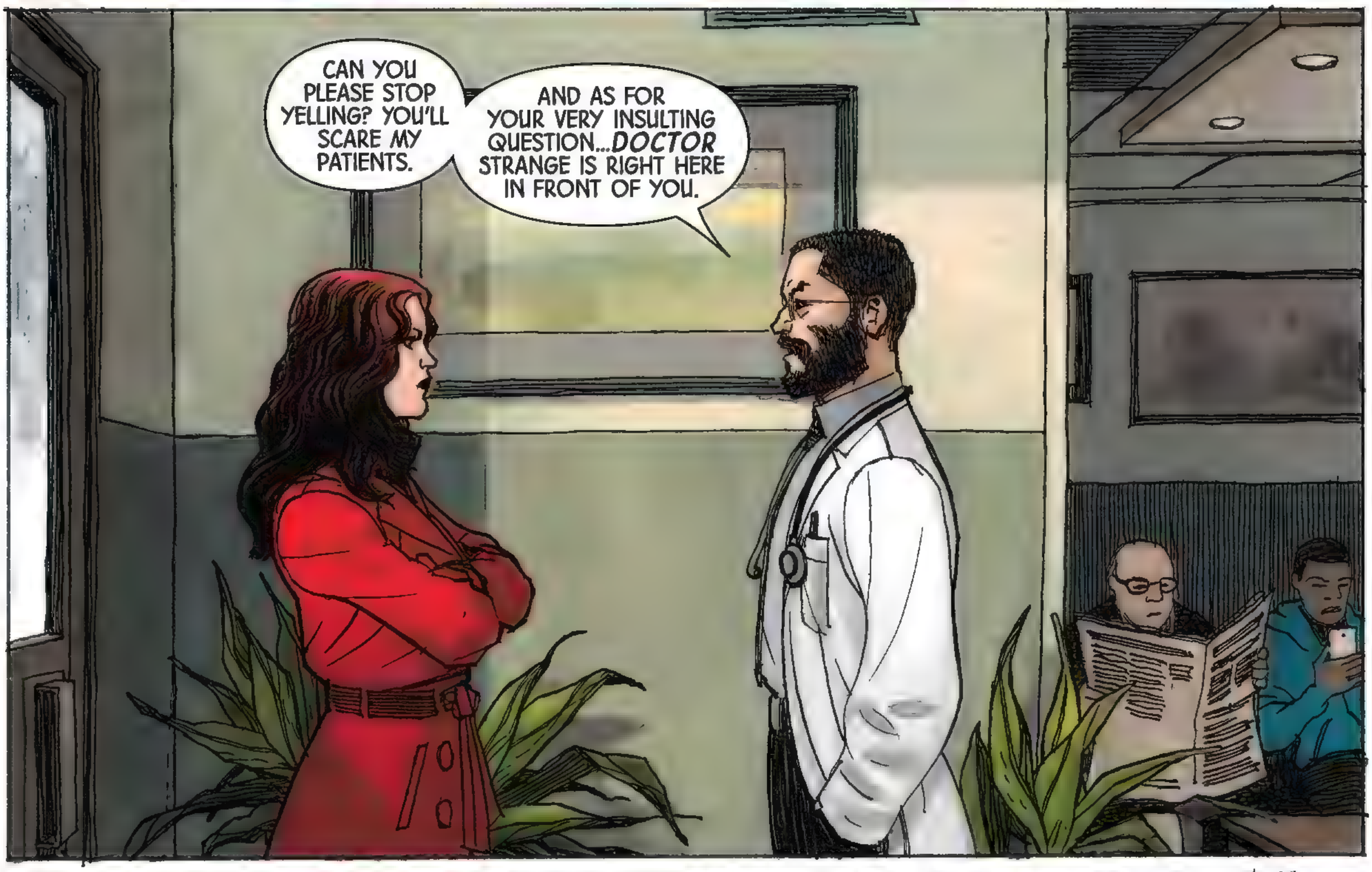
I SEE EVERYTHING NOW.



RMMMMBLLL
THANK YOU, LOKI.
DO NOT WASTE THIS CHANCE. I'LL BE WATCHING.
I KNOW YOU WILL BE. GOOD LUCK...

...DOCTOR FOSTER.
"YEAH, ACTUALLY. I HAVE ONE MORE QUESTION...

WHERE THE HELL IS DOCTOR STRANGE IN ALL OF THIS?!


CAN YOU PLEASE STOP YELLING? YOU'LL SCARE MY PATIENTS.
AND AS FOR YOUR VERY INSULTING QUESTION...*DOCTOR* STRANGE IS RIGHT HERE IN FRONT OF YOU.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEANT, STEPHEN.
I DO. AND I DON'T APPRECIATE THE IDEA THAT I AM SOMEHOW MADE LESS-THAN BECAUSE I'M RETIRED.

YOU DIDN'T RETIRE! YOU GOT BEAT! GET OVER IT AND GET YOUR HEAD BACK IN THE GAME! YOU MAY NOT BE THE SORCERER SUPREME ANYMORE, BUT YOU CAN'T JUST GIVE--
WANDA, HOW MANY TIMES ARE WE GOING TO HAVE THIS ARGUMENT?

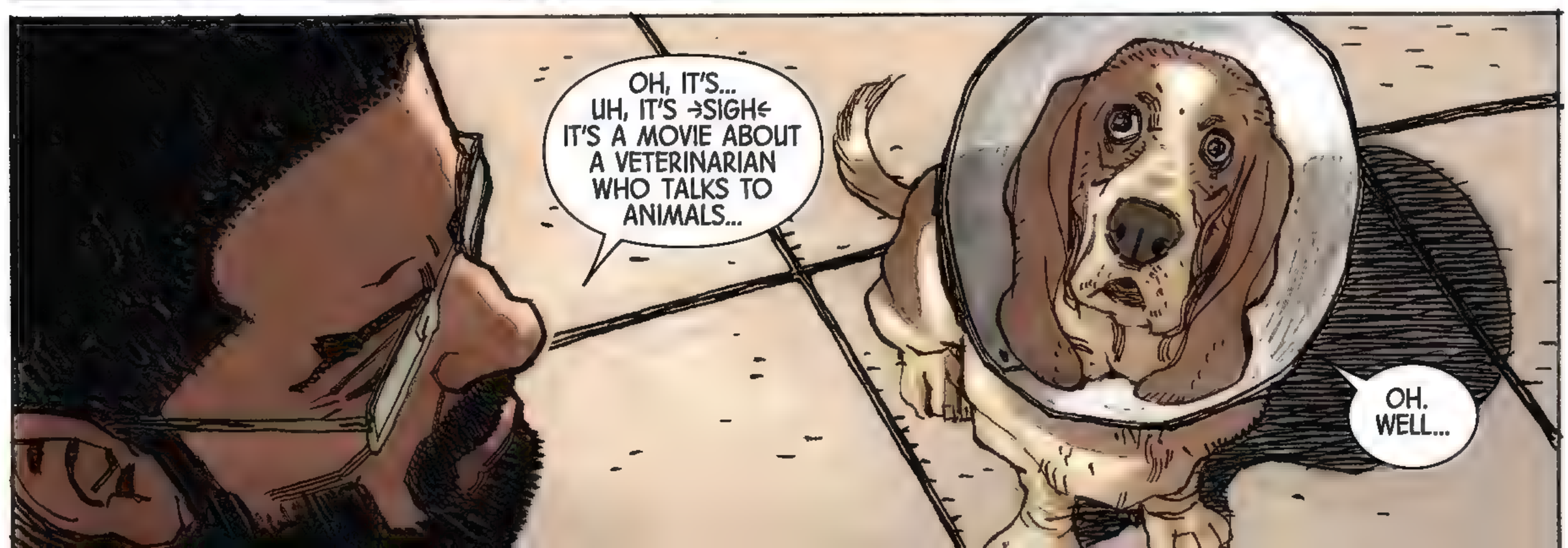
I DIDN'T ASK TO BECOME WHAT I WAS. I DIDN'T LEARN MAGIC TO JOIN THE AVENGERS--I DID IT TO FIX MY HANDS SO I COULD HELP PEOPLE.
AND NOW... I AM. I REALLY AM HELPING PEOPLE.
IN MY OWN WAY.

I'M NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT EITHER BUT...LOKI... HE'S THE SORCERER SUPREME NOW. AND I'M--

RIGHT. AND YOU'RE HAPPY JUST BEING DOCTOR DOLITTLE...

SLAM

WHAT'S DOCTOR DOLITTLE?


OH, IT'S... UH, IT'S →SIGH← IT'S A MOVIE ABOUT A VETERINARIAN WHO TALKS TO ANIMALS...
OH. WELL...

...THAT'S A PRETTY GOOD JOKE, DOC.
TO BE CONTINUED...

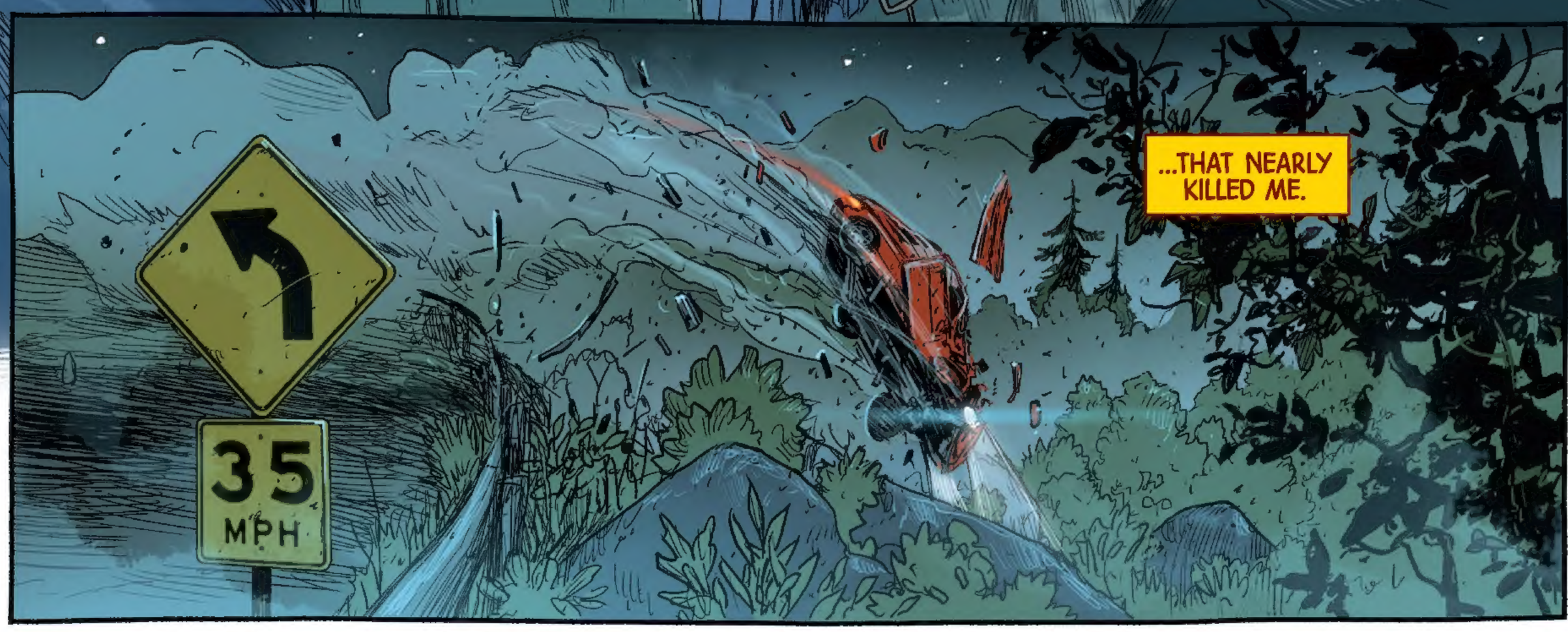
NEXT: DOG DOCTOR VERSUS DEITY OF DECEPTION! **#382** ON SALE IN DECEMBER

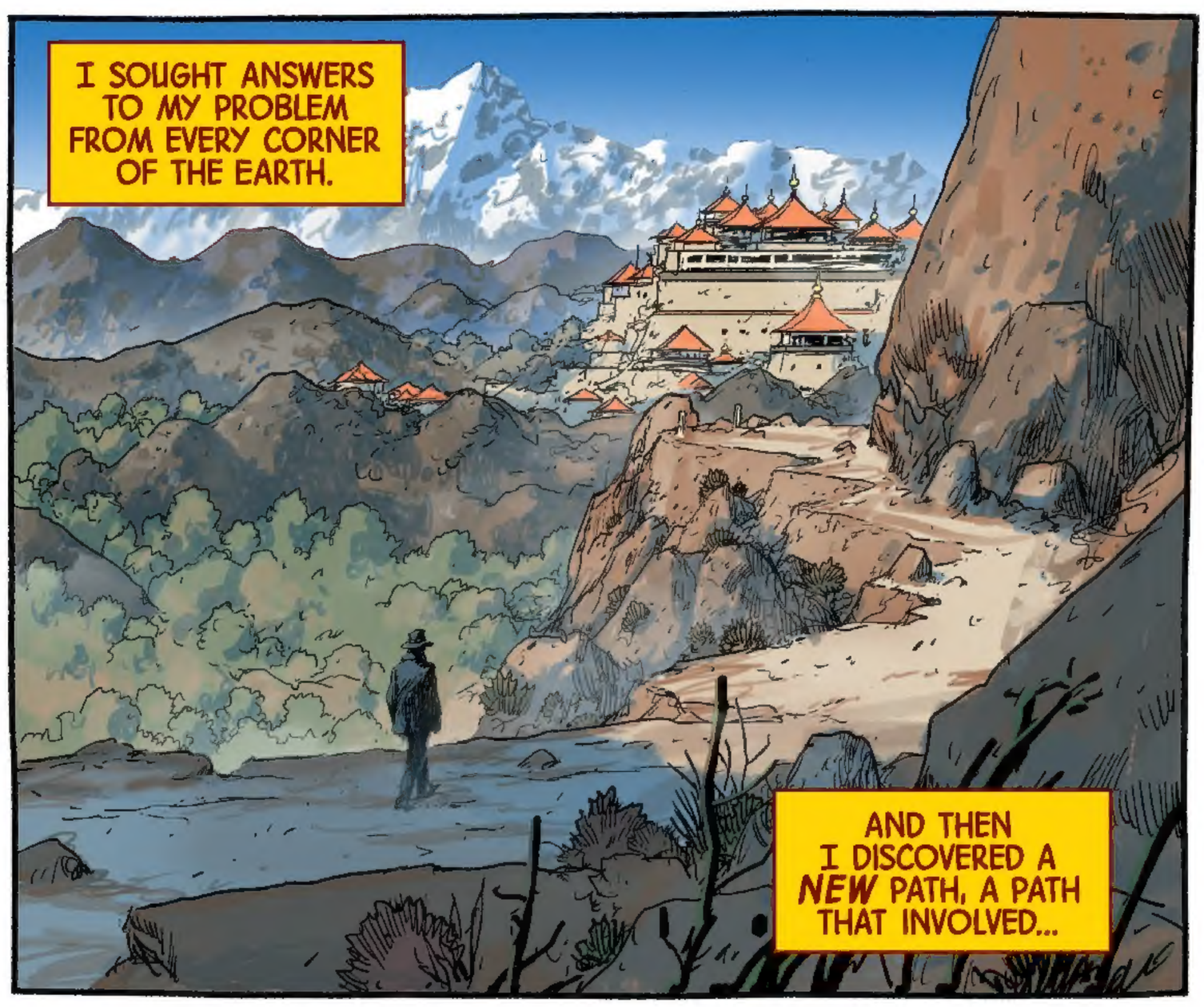
LETTERS TO THE EDITORS & QUERIES FOR KADAVUS ARE WELCOME AT **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM.** MARK YOUR MISSIVES **"OKAY TO PRINT."**

MY NAME IS *DOCTOR STEPHEN STRANGE.*

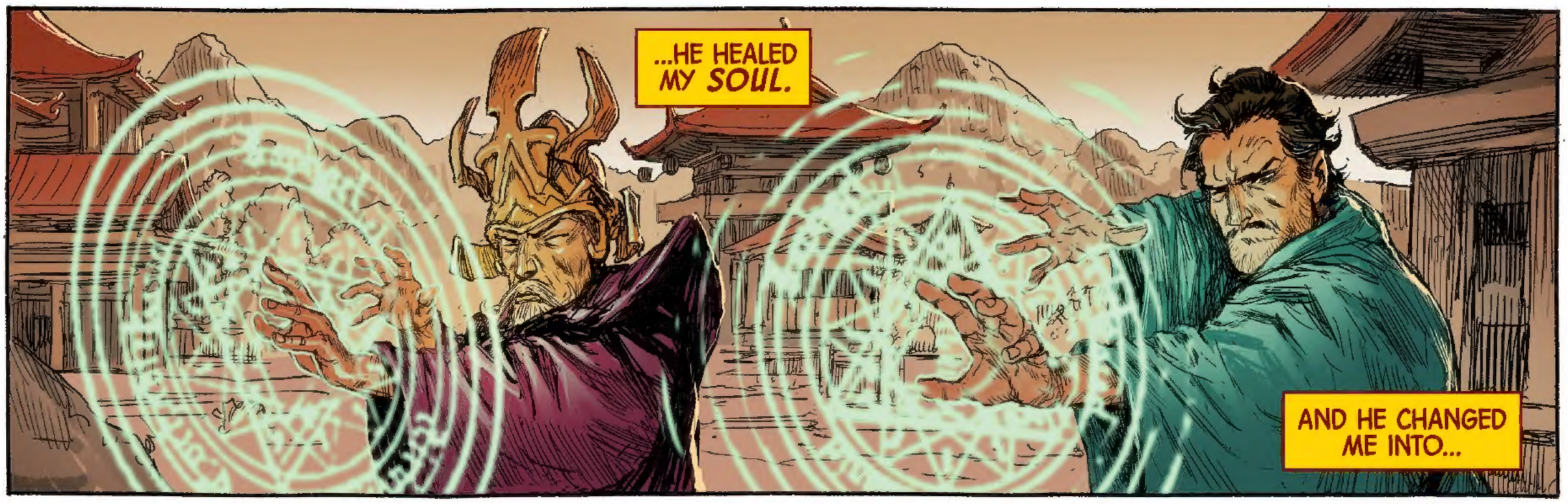
WHEN I BEGAN MY CAREER AS A NEUROSURGEON, I WANTED TO SAVE PEOPLE FOR THE RIGHT REASONS.

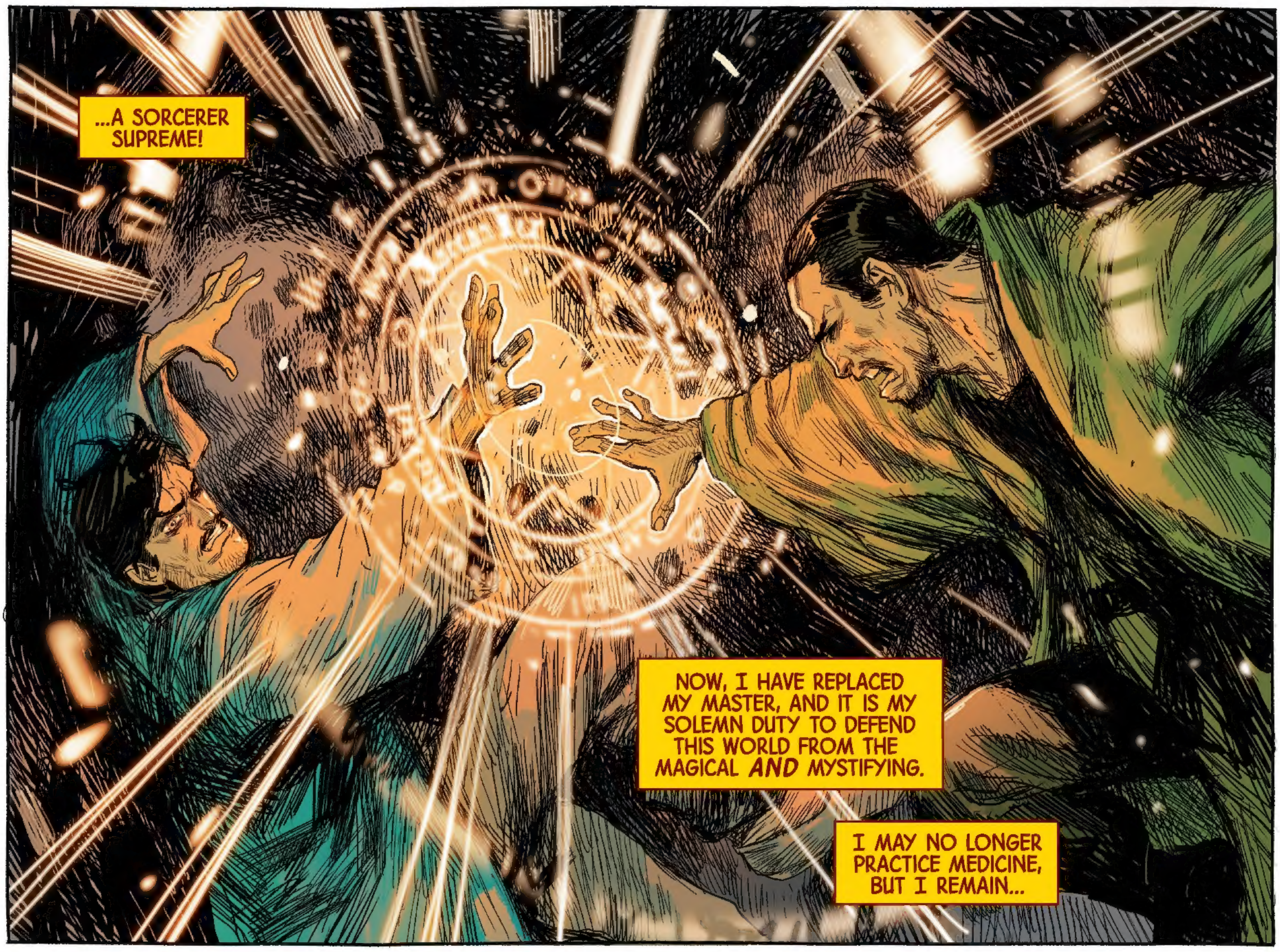
BUT YOUTHFUL ARROGANCE GOT IN THE WAY OF MY ALTRUISTIC GOALS. I SOUGHT MONEY, FAME AND FORTUNE. ALL OF IT LEADING ME DOWN A PATH...





...MAGIC.
I HAD HEARD RUMORS OF THE MAN KNOWN AS *THE ANCIENT ONE*--A MYSTICAL ENTITY WITH GREAT POWER. I BELIEVED HE COULD *HEAL* MY HANDS. INSTEAD...


...HE HEALED MY *SOUL*.
AND HE CHANGED ME INTO...


...A SORCERER SUPREME!
NOW, I HAVE REPLACED MY MASTER, AND IT IS MY SOLEMN DUTY TO DEFEND THIS WORLD FROM THE MAGICAL *AND* MYSTIFYING.
I MAY NO LONGER PRACTICE MEDICINE, BUT I REMAIN...

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